

Ragnar Hasselgren passed away



RAGNAR HASSELGREN
with his guitar

The Swedish Colony of the Bay Area was saddened when news got around that Ragnar Hasselgren had passed away, a man that had entertained so many during so many years. He passed away on September 28th at the Millbrae Serra Convalescent Hospital. He was 78 years old, born June 3rd, 1904.

Ragnar (Rung) Hasselgren was born in Hedemora, Dalarna in Sweden and came to this country 2 years old with his parents and two sisters. They settled in Montana where he grew up. Real early he showed talent for music and song and played several instruments — guitar, violin, piano, accordion — like his father and sister Helga.

Hasselgren came to San Francisco in 1924 and learned the carpenter trade when employed by a Swedish Builder, Victor Holmgren. He was also employed at Folsom state prison as construction and maintenance man and Henry Doelger's Westlake Development. In 1965 Hasselgren began a 15 years employment with the elementary school district in Pacifica as maintenance Supervisor. His job grew from four to fifteen schools and he was the Supervisor of 45 carpenters, painters, plumbers and custodians.

Besides his job he was also a singer and music man and was much sought after as entertainer at meetings, weddings and the like. He was one of the good old vaudeville entertainers. During World War II he served in the U.S. Navy.

In 1971 Hasselgren went to Sweden for the first time since he came to the U.S. 2 years old. Friends say he got tears in his eyes when he saw the house where he was born. Also when he went to lake Siljan, the lake he had sung so much about. "Vid Siljan är mitt hem" became his trade song. He

was also a member of the church Choir in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Pacifica.

In recent years Ragnar Hasselgren had been in poor health. After a slight stroke he had difficulty of walking. He was an Elder of St. Andrews Church in Pacifica, member of Balder Masonic Lodge of San Francisco and Sunset Chapter, Order of White Shrine of Jerusalem in S.F.

He is survived by a nephew, Robert Pristkow, San Ramon, niece Monita Gallagher of Anaconda, Montana, cousin Edith Nunes, San Jose and grandnieces and nephews in Sweden.

Funeral services were held at Anderson Chapel in San Francisco with Masonic and church rituals. Many friends said farewell to a man that had spread sunshine for so many years. Interment was at Skylawn Memorial Park.